



## OCB Judge's Packet

### **OCB Contest Guidelines**

Judges should review the Contest Guidelines on the OCB website.com prior to each event to ensure their familiarity with the latest guidelines and procedures being used by OCB.

### **OCB Score Sheets**

Judges should review the score sheets in the Administrative section of the OCB website.com prior to each event to ensure their familiarity with the latest versions of forms used by OCB.

### **Number of Judges**

Judging panels for bodybuilding & figure are of an odd number, consisting of at least five individuals. A minimum of seven judges is required for pro qualifiers. Attempts should be made for panels to consist of a nearly even split between males and females whenever possible.

### **Objectivity of Judges**

Judges should attempt to remain objective, especially when competitors they are familiar with are entered in an event. The use of good, clear, objective judging can form the basis of an equitable reputation among competitors, spectators, fellow judges, other organizations and the media.

### **Handling of Official Scores**

Judges should not disclose any scores to anyone other than the tabulator, prior to official announcements being made.

### **Judging Appointments**

Judging appointments for contests can be made based on past judging experience, having extensive experience as a physique organization administrator, having achieved pro status as a competitor, or having satisfactorily passed test judging.

## Tendencies That Can Compromise Judging

Most judges set out to perform their duties as fairly and as objective as possible. However, there are certain subconscious emotional prejudices that can inhibit one's ability to do so. Every effort should be made to be aware of and avoid these impediments to accurate judging. The following are some of the most common tendencies to be avoided:

### **Judging Based on Personal Relationship**

Judges should avoid scoring competitors favorably, or unfavorably, due to any type of personal relationships they may have with them. While most judges attempt to avoid any conscious biases, subconsciously it is very difficult to not see certain people in a somewhat different light, so to speak. Judges need to be keenly aware in situations where they know competitors and work especially hard in evaluating and placing those individuals.

### **Judging Based on Past Accomplishments**

Judges should avoid scoring competitors based on reputation or previous placements. Contestants should be evaluated and placed for each contest based on their appearance on the given day.

### **Judging Based on Preferences**

While each judge brings certain tastes, prejudices and opinions to the table (which helps make up the individuality of a judging panel), their own preferences should not interfere with judging all competitors fairly according to the designated guidelines. Judges should assign placements based on the scoring criteria established by the organization.

Judging based on preference can be particularly applicable when a judge is also a competitor. Most competitors have favorite body parts, or possibly areas they are lacking or worked hard to bring up to par. Higher priority can unknowingly be placed on certain traits in cases such as these unless conscious attempts are made to avoid this.

### **Allowing Audience Reactions to Influence Placements**

Very often, the amount of audience response a competitor receives during prejudging is more a result of how many people they bring with them as opposed to how good they actually look. Judges should ignore audience participation (which is actually encouraged at events) and score only according to what they see on stage.

# Scoring

## Scoring Sheet Set-Up

When a lineup of competitors is brought on stage, judges should check to assure that the numbers on their score sheets match the competitors' numbers. The score sheet is designed with the competitor number listed to the far left. The lowest athlete number in the class gets listed at the top of the form. All other competitors in the same class are listed below in ascending sequential order by competitor number.

## The Importance of Accessibility and Accountability to the Athlete

A judge has certain responsibilities to the athletes. First and foremost is to attempt to judge and place the competitors as accurately as possible. But many times this is not enough. Competitors are frequently unhappy with their placements and the tension is exasperated when a judge either cannot give them definitive reasons why they placed where they did or is not available after the show to do so. While the competitor usually disagrees with such explanations from judges, they go a long way toward diffusing tension and preventing a competitor from developing a low opinion of promoters, judges and an organization. Other competitors accept their placements and look to the judges for constructive criticism on how they can improve. This can be an extremely important form of input for a bodybuilder to use. Of particular use is advice from judges who are also competitive bodybuilders. They not only can explain a competitor's shortcomings, but can also offer training, nutrition, and contest preparation tips the athlete can use to remedy the problems. The use of a note sheet facilitates the process of providing such information to competitors. Judge Note Sheets are separate sheets from score sheets. This enables them to be retained after scores are turned into a tabulator. Judges should remain present for at least 15 minutes after the completion of a contest to be available to provide this service to competitors.

## Best Poser or Presentation Scoring

Promoters often offer Best Poser awards for bodybuilding and Best Presentation awards for Figure. Judge's typically rate individual presentations from 1-10 for this procedure, ten being the highest, and placing their votes for the competitor(s) with the highest ratings after all individual presentations are completed.

## Judges are requested to abide by the following:

- Not communicate with the other judges during the judging procedures (judges may communicate with the Head Judge to transmit a request for a particular pose, change in competitor placement on stage, or to inquire about a particular procedure).
- Not communicate with contestants or audience members during judging.
- Not divulge any placements prior to the awards presentation.
- Not publicly disagree with the final outcome of the competition at the event.
- Not be absent from any part of the judging.
- Not conduct themselves in a manner that could reflect adversely upon the competition, promoter, other judges, organization or sport.

## Judge Analysis Procedures

Competition scoring is statistically reviewed after OCB events in an effort to monitor judging quality. The evaluation method devised for this analyzes consistency and accuracy with respect to average placements among the judging panel at a particular event. While basing evaluation on a panel's scores isn't foolproof, it is felt to be the most practical approach available to gain a fairly effective and objective statistical means to base judging quality on.

Scoring ratings are devised in the following manner: (being added soon)



## OCB FIGURE - THE DESIRED LOOK



# Judge's Guide to Providing Feedback to Competitors

After the show, competitors may contact judges for feedback. Some competitors are happy with placements and are looking for constructive criticism while others may be unhappy and inquire about the reasons for their placements. Regardless of why a competitor contacts a judge, it is important to provide honest, accurate and valuable feedback.

**The purpose of this guide is to:**

1. Assist judges with understanding the basics of good feedback
2. Provide a summary list of do's and don'ts
3. Provide examples of good and bad feedback

## Good Feedback Basics

**Good feedback starts with good notes.** After a long day of judging it can be easy to forget the strengths and weaknesses of each competitor, especially at shows with a larger number of participants. In order to provide detailed feedback, it is important for judges to take detailed notes. Some judges find it difficult to take notes during prejudging since they're deciding on placement assignments at the same time. Any notes that can be jotted down during prejudging can be a good start. During individual presentations at finals is the best time to take detailed notes. Competitors are on stage alone for at least 60 seconds making it easier to concentrate on their physiques, color, grooming, posing, and overall appearance. Do not throw your notes away or leave them at the venue – hold on to them. Some competitors even try to contact judge's weeks after a show.

**Read a competitor's email twice before writing a response.** Many competitors will ask specific questions. Make sure to read the email thoroughly to ensure their questions or concerns are addressed.

Some competitors are doing multiple shows, so be sure to provide feedback that addresses short-term and off-season improvements.

**Read the Judging Guidelines** – Refer back to the judging guidelines to ensure feedback given is in alignment with an organization's guidelines. Judges should not provide feedback that is in contradiction to established guidelines. That can make a judge and organization look bad.

**Good feedback should address the good and the bad.** When providing feedback it is important to provide a balance strengths and weaknesses. No one wants to receive an email stating how great they are when they placed third in a class and similarly no one wants to read an email stating they did everything wrong.

**Set the tone.** In order to set a positive tone, start with a competitor's strong points. Preparing for a show is hard work and starting with the positive helps competitors feel good about what they accomplished. Some examples are:

- "What I admire about your style..."
- "I'm impressed with the way you ..."
- "I really liked how you..."
- "That was very impressive how you..."
- "What stood out to me the most was ..."

**Provide suggestions for improvement.** After addressing a competitor's strong points, be sure to state weaknesses. This is probably the most critical part of providing feedback. A judge's feedback can help a competitor grow or can break their spirit. When drafting this part of feedback, be sensitive to people's feelings. Every weakness should have a suggestion for improvement. Give honest, helpful, and appropriate suggestions.

Avoid phrases such as:

- "You did..."
- "You were..."
- "You should..."
- "You must..."
- "Do's and Don'ts"
- "Rights and Wrongs".

Use personal statements whenever possible, describing your reactions.

- "I felt..."
- "It seemed to me..."
- "I wonder if..."
- "I sense..."

Avoid "but" and "however" - "You started out very strong, but/however..." The "but" and "however" negates everything said before. Make two separate sentences or connect them with "and."

**End on a positive note.** After pointing out strengths and areas for improvements, it is time to wrap up. A judge doesn't want a competitor to feel discouraged. Therefore, try to end feedback on a positive note. For example:

- "Good luck at your next show..."
- "Overall I think [insert something positive]"
- "I look forward to seeing you compete again..."

**Spell and grammar check.** Most email providers have spell check and grammar check. Judges are not being judged by their ability to spell; however, misspelled words and poor grammar may make it difficult for a competitor to understand what is trying to be said.

**Think before sending.** Sometimes judges are in a rush to respond to competitors and may miss something, or write something that can be misinterpreted. After drafting an email, (especially if a competitor needs significant improvements), it may be beneficial to wait a few hours before responding. Re-reading an email a little later as if the recipient gives a judge an opportunity to reflect on how the feedback may be received by someone else.

## Do's and Don'ts of Feedback

### Do:

- Show you care.
- Personalize your language.
- Give positive reinforcement.
- Be specific
- Format your email so that it is easy to decipher
- Ask competitors to contact you if they have any questions or concerns regarding your feedback
- Do offer training, nutrition, and contest prep tips
- Ask the competitor to send you photos, if you do not remember who they are

### Don't

- Provide competitors with names of coaches, trainers, nutritionist, etc. If they ask direct them to links on the OCB website.
- Give unsolicited feedback. Some times people do not ask for feedback for a reason.
- Discuss a competitor's feedback with anyone except other judges.
- Do not discuss another competitor's weaknesses in front of another competitor
- Do not complain about the judging to competitors
- Throw your notes away or leave them at the venue.

## Examples of Good and Bad Feedback

In this section there are examples of good and back feedback. Analysis of the feedback is provided in italics.

### Good Feedback

#### Competitor's Email:

I wanted to get some feedback on some things I can improve on long-term and short-term. I'm competing in 11 days, are there any minor tweaks I can make?

Judge's Email:	Why this is "Good" Feedback
Yes, there are definitely some things you can do in 11 days. First, you looked gorgeous. I loved your hair and makeup. You have great stage presence.	The judge started with the competitor's strong points. The judge was clear and concise. The opening line of the email shows the judge understands the competitor is looking for some short-term improvements.
In the short-term, you can improve your posing. Try to hold your arms down closer at your sides and with less bend in the elbows. You can do this without losing the flare in your lats, it just takes practice. Also, don't hunch your shoulders as much. This will make your shoulders appear more rounded/capped off. Also make sure to take a deep breath in and hold your chest up and expanded. Crunching down on abs ruins the lines of the physique and makes it look like you have poor posture. I also thought you could have been leaner in the glute/hamstring area. This is something that could be improved through diet between now and the next show.  The 2-piece is okay. I think you may want to consider a top that is a better fit and more flattering to your physique. If you don't have time to borrow or	<i>The judge pointed out weaknesses; however, also provided specific actions the competitor can do to improve.</i>

buy a suit in the next 11 days, try to tie the suit so that it stays in place.	
In the long-term, you want to build up your delts for more roundness and fullness. Also, work on overall leg size. Getting a little more muscle maturity over the years will give you a fuller and harder appearance.	<i>The judge took the time to provide long-term suggestions. These are the things the competitor can work on in the off-season</i>
Great structure and base though with lots of potential to keep moving up the ranks.	<i>The judge ends on a positive note.</i>

**Competitor's Email:**

I was competitor number #10 this weekend. I was hoping that you could give me some feedback. I'm competing again in 3 weeks.

<b>Judge's Email:</b>	<b>Why this is "Good" Feedback</b>
First of all, Congrats on competing in your third show!! You looked a more conditioned and leaner than at the OCB No Name Show. The definition in your quads was amazing. Your conditioning was "on", so between now and your next show try not to lean out any more.	<i>The judge starts with on a positive note. The judge acknowledges improvements since the competitor's last show.</i>
Your walk was very elegant and diva-ish!!  During pre-judging your arms were a little too high, so try to relax them and keep them down a little more. You also looked just a little nervous (something you did with your eyes), but I thought your overall stage presence was great.	<i>The judge provides short-term improvements.</i>
Your royal blue suit went very well with your skin tone. Your color was right and your shine was just right. In the evening you looked a little fuller and everything came out more (I saw abs, and an overall fullness in your appearance)!! You had a beautiful smile and you should be proud of yourself!!	<i>The judge addresses the competitor's overall presentation. In addition, the judge pointed out differences in the competitor's physique between pre-judging and finals.</i>
I would focus on your upper body a little more in the off-season to have a good balance and improve your overall symmetry. You did show a v-taper, so adding on size will make your back look even more incredible!! Your shoulders looked a little boxy, so adding size would make them project a little better!	<i>The judge provides improvements for the off-season and conveys the message with such flair, that it actually appears positive.</i>
When you add size during the off-season you will look even better!  Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. Good luck at your next show.	<i>The judge ends on a positive note.</i>

**Competitor's Email:**

Thanks so much for judging. I know there were a lot of people in the show. I was competitor #75. I competed in the Novice middleweight and the Open middleweight. I am a little disappointed in my placement in the Open class. I'm hoping you can shed light on why I placed third and not first.

<b>Judge's Email:</b>	<b>Why this is "Good" Feedback</b>
Hey Competitor #75, I understand your position. I too have competed and placed differently than I was expecting. Your class was a tough class to judge and at the level of competition third is something to be proud of.	<i>The judge recognizes that the competitor is upset. In the opening line the judge attempts to relate to the competitor in order to diffuse the person's disappointment.</i>
Posing: During the symmetry round, I thought you had great symmetry. However, during your front and rear poses, your posing threw your symmetry off. On your front double biceps remember to keep your legs engaged in the pose. On your rear double biceps, I thought you could have opened up your back. By squeezing your shoulder blades, it was difficult to see the detailing in your back and it threw off your symmetry. Also, on your rear shots remember to squeeze your glutes and hamstrings.	<i>The judge started with something positive then continued to provide a critique of where the competitor could have been better. The critique is followed by specific actions the competitor can take to improve</i>
Color: It seemed to me that you could have been darker. The stage lights washed out your physique, which made it hard to see some of your detailing. In bodybuilding, there is no such thing as being too dark.	<i>The judge provides feedback on the competitor's overall presentation. Some times a person's color can cost a placement.</i>

In the off-season, I suggest working on developing more size and thickness. Specifically, I think your lats and your chest could be thicker.	<i>The judge provides long-term improvements.</i>
Any of the top 5 competitors could have placed first. In a show where the competition is stiff, every little detail matters.	<i>This subtly reiterates that the competitor's 3<sup>rd</sup> place was well earned.</i>
I think you have a bright future in this sport.	<i>The judge ends on a positive note.</i>

## Bad Feedback

### Competitor's Email:

Thanks so much for judging. This was my first show and I would appreciate any feedback you can provide me. Thanks in advance.

### Judge's Email:

Sorry for the delayed response. I thought your posing was decent, and I think you could have been leaner. I think you have a decent shape and 3 – 4 weeks of dieting would help.

You have a bright future.

Good luck,  
Judge #3

### Why this is "Bad" Feedback:

The email was vague and is not particularly helpful for a first time competitor. The judge stated the competitor's posing was decent, but did not provide any suggestions to make it great. The judge stated the competitor needs to be leaner, and provides a suggestion. The main problem with the suggestion is giving an actual timeframe. The competitor may only need 3 weeks of dieting; however, the competitor may need 8 weeks of dieting. An alternative is to provide the competitor with an example by what is meant by leaner. For example, "One area for improvement is being leaner overall. The judges are looking for visual separation and striation in the quads."

### Competitor's Email:

I am extremely disappointed in the judging at Saturday's show. I have read the guidelines thoroughly; however, I have NO idea what the judges were looking at. I am not happy about my placing. I had better symmetry and muscularity than the guys who won. He had better conditioning, BUT judging is based on symmetry, muscularity and conditioning.

In addition, I noticed that some judges did not even look at me. I heard that one of the judges is dating the guy who won. Anyway I am hoping you can shed some light on the judging debacle.

Competitor #19

### Judge's Email:

Competitor #19,

I have no idea what happened on Saturday. I placed you first and I am actually shocked myself that you placed third. I agree with your assessment. I placed you first because I thought you had better symmetry and conditioning. There are seven judges with different opinions. I do know there were a few figure competitors who judged bodybuilding, which I do not agree with. Hang in there. Remember this is a subjective sport.

Good luck,  
Judge #3

### Why this is "Bad" Feedback:

There is nothing right about this email. A judge's individual opinion becomes a part of the collective judging panel's opinion. If a judge is unhappy about the judging at an event he/she should address concerns with the head judge of the show or federation's leaders and NOT the competitors.

*Judge's Email (The RIGHT Way):*  
Competitor #19,

*I am sorry you are disappointed in Saturday's judging. I will admit that it was a difficult show to judge since the caliber of talent was through the roof. I would recommend contacting all the judges and asking for feedback. They can provide better insight as to their thought process.*

*I think you have a great foundation to build on. You have great symmetry and muscularity. I did note that your overall conditioning could have been better. You appeared smooth, which made it difficult to see your muscles details. For example, on the abs pose, your abs did not pop and I could not see separation in your legs.*

*I am not aware of the relationship between a judge and the competitor who won. However, I will address your concern with the head judge and the federation's president.*

*I hope that you will consider competing with the organization in the future.*

*Judge #3*

Some of the information in this guide was adapted from: How to Give and Receive Effective Feedback  
<http://www.protocolplus.net/feedback.html>